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VOL. 92 NO. 6 SEPTEMBER 2007

# IE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

CALIFORNIA  
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

SEP - 4 2007

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Anthony De Cicco

Two fifth-grade students from Esperanza Elementary School in Oakland restoring native habitat at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline.

## Freight Terminal Threatens Restored Oakland Wetlands

**G**olden Gate Audubon played a critical role in creating the restored wetlands at Oakland's Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline. Many years in the making, this site is one of the Bay Area's most successful wetland restoration projects, and the MLK wetland complex now hosts one of the most significant shorebird and waterfowl populations in the Central Bay.

Today, this wetland jewel on San Leandro Bay is once again at risk: a damaging development—an all-hours freight terminal—has been proposed directly adjacent to the site. The bay historically contained 1,800 acres of tidal marshland that supported resident and migratory birds. Only a fraction, 150 acres, remains today, 72 acres of which were restored thanks to Golden Gate Audubon's efforts. For this reason, Golden Gate Audubon puts a high priority on conserving and restoring every significant tidal marsh and wetland in the area.

The MLK, Jr. Regional Shoreline was completed in 1998 after Golden Gate Audubon and other environmental groups successfully sued the Port of Oakland over its destruction of wetlands on the Oakland Airport property in 1986. The lawsuit resulted in a settlement of \$2.5 million to restore wetlands at Arrowhead Marsh.

Nearly 70 species of birds and other wildlife call the MLK wetland complex

FREIGHT TERMINAL continued on page 12



## Don't Miss GGA's Anniversary Gala

**N**ext month, on October 11, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Golden Gate Audubon will celebrate our 90th anniversary with a gala reception at Pier 1 in San Francisco. We've put together quite an evening, and we hope you can join us!

A display, with a time line of our 90 years of accomplishments and a map of areas we've worked to protect over the years, will greet guests as they enter Pier 1. Guests will then be treated to a variety of organic foods from local restaurant favorites, including Quince and A16, and lamb from Lava Lake Ranch. We'll also feature local wines from Saintsbury and Owl Ridge, and tastings of special Rosenblum wines served by prominent GGA member, trip leader, and former board president George Peyton.

The celebration will feature both a silent and a live auction, so bring your bidding hats! The auctions are great ways to support Golden Gate Audubon and take home some fabulous items for yourself or your friends and family members. Included in the silent auction are rare bird prints and paintings, dinners at fine restaurants in San Francisco and the East Bay, birding and photography classes, and gardening and landscape consultations. We'll also have theater tickets, jewelry, weekend getaways, and a private dinner and piano concert. The live auction caps off the evening, with board member Phil

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

*The Gull* is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

*The Gull* - ISSN 0164-971X

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# GGA Welcomes New Board and Staff

**T**hree new members, Phil Price, Eric Biber, and Diane Ross-Leech, have joined the Golden Gate Audubon board of directors.

Phil Price, an enthusiastic birder, is a physicist in the Environmental Energy Technologies Division of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, where he works primarily on matters related to indoor air quality. He served for the past several years on Berkeley's Parks and Recreation Commission, and as a member of the city's Creeks Task Force, he helped craft a creek protection ordinance for Berkeley.

Eric Biber is a law professor at U.C. Berkeley, where he teaches and does research in environmental and natural resources law. A birder for over 10 years, he has worked on bird conservation projects in New York, Hawaii, Arizona, and Big Sur, California. His other interests include hiking, backpacking, climbing, and skiing.

Diane Ross-Leech, a landscape architect by training, is an environmental policy manager for PG&E, where she has worked for over 20 years. In 2000 she created the Habitat and Species Protection Program, which develops multispecies habitat conservation plans, migratory bird protection plans, and other efforts that help PG&E be environmentally responsible. She serves on the management board of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, which protects baywide wildlife habitats, and on the board of directors of the San Francisco Bay Trail.

While we welcome these new board members, we are sorry to say goodbye to three valuable directors: Jacqui Smalley, Bob Bennett, and Sylvia Stone.

During her nine-and-a-half-year tenure, Jacqui Smalley dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and energy to Golden Gate Audubon. As chair of our East Bay Conservation Committee for five years, she worked on numerous important conservation issues and received the Elsie Roemer Award for her efforts on GGA's behalf. She was also a key member of the Development Committee, which devised a strategy for GGA's successful fundraising efforts. Jacqui chaired the Board Development Committee, which recruited effective new directors, such as our three new members, and she participated in the search committee that hired Executive Director Elizabeth Murdock. For the past two years, she served as board vice president.

Bob Bennett was tapped to join the board in 2003 for his strong interest in GGA's San Francisco conservation issues and his hands-on work in wetland restoration at Pier 94. When he assumed the chairmanship of the San Francisco Conservation Committee in 2003, he used his exceptional administrative skills to organize and strengthen the committee into the effective, hardworking group it is today.

Sylvia Stone Busby joined the board for a second time in 2005 and served as chair of the Human Resources Committee. Under her guidance, the committee developed many policies to better support our staff. As a professional conservationist, Sylvia contributed her knowledge and expertise to GGA conservation actions and decisions.

We are very grateful to Jacqui, Bob, and Sylvia for contributing their expertise and skills and for their commitment and dedication to Golden Gate Audubon.

Two new staff members have joined GGA. Rubén Guzmán signed on last May as the new Eco-Oakland Program coordinator. Rubén has worked with schoolchildren on environmental education and artistic projects in Oakland and the greater East Bay for the past 10 years. A native of Mexico City, he holds a bachelor's degree in graphic design from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana in Mexico City, as well as certification in wilderness leadership and emergency medical training.

Kristin Bunting joined GGA as the new office manager in July, replacing Tara Zuardo, who is headed for law school in Oregon. Kristin volunteered with GGA for many months, helping Tara with database management and other administrative tasks. She has worked for a variety of businesses since 2000 and is currently working toward an AS in biology at Contra Costa College. We are delighted to have Kristin on staff, and we thank Tara for her invaluable work and wish her the best.

# PG&E Sponsors 90th Anniversary Celebration

**G**olden Gate Audubon will mark our 90th anniversary next month with a celebratory reception at Pier 1, thanks in part to the generous support of our lead corporate sponsor, Pacific Gas and Electric Company. PG&E has been an important supporter of Golden Gate Audubon's work, and we are honored to have its support for this momentous occasion.

PG&E has provided funding for our Eco-Oakland Program through the Nature Restoration Trust and the Stewardship Council. Its environmental staff is committed to conservation, seeking to shape PG&E's corporate leadership on environmental issues. Wendy Pulling, PG&E's director of environmental policy, sits on the Audubon California board of directors, where she has played an important role in promoting bird conservation. Diane Ross-Leech, whose environmental work at PG&E was recognized with the company's Richard A. Clarke Environmental Leadership Award in 2004, recently joined the Golden Gate Audubon board of directors. Diane and her staff are also important participants in the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, through which they have supported Bay Area wetland restoration, worked proactively to coordinate PG&E activities with the Joint Venture's conservation goals, and played an active role in the South Bay Salt Ponds restoration project. In the Bay Area, PG&E participates in Your Wetlands, an initiative to protect more than 200,000 acres of wetlands in the nine counties surrounding San Francisco Bay.

Golden Gate Audubon thanks the following sponsors for their generous contributions to our 90th anniversary celebration.

Jay and Lisa Pierrepont  
Crocodile Bay Resort  
Jacqui Smalley and John Austin  
Saintsbury Vineyard  
Starbucks Coffee Company  
The Port of San Francisco



These four Peregrine Falcon chicks grew to full size and were hunting above San Francisco's Financial District several weeks after hatching in 2005.

One of California's largest landowners, PG&E strives to meet and exceed stringent state requirements for the protection of natural resources. As funder of the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, PG&E is partnering with conservation organizations across the state to protect 140,000 acres of watershed lands and the birds and wildlife that depend on them. According to Frederic Reid, director of conservation planning at Ducks Unlimited, PG&E has contributed to habitat restoration efforts at several wetlands refuges in California's Central Valley, to the benefit of millions of migratory birds each winter.

PG&E identifies its Avian Protection Program as one of its key conservation initiatives. This program seeks to protect migratory species and threatened and endangered birds in areas affected by PG&E activities while maintaining power supply for PG&E customers. The company is also working in partnership with Monterey County, the Ventana Wildlife Society, California State Parks, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reduce impacts to

the federally endangered California Condor, which can be electrocuted or injured by colliding with power lines. PG&E is trying to address these threats by researching the most effective ways to reduce collisions, installing bird-flight diverters and retrofitting high-risk areas in California Condor habitat in Big Sur.

PG&E has also won significant public attention in recent years for its efforts to protect Peregrine Falcons nesting in San Francisco's Financial District, in partnership with the University of California-Santa Cruz's Predatory Bird Research Group (SCPB RG). In the mid-1980s, SCPBRG began noticing Peregrine Falcons using PG&E's downtown San Francisco office building as a nesting perch. The group installed a nest box on a 33rd-floor ledge, with hopes that the falcons would nest there. In 2003 the first pair—dubbed George and Gracie—did. In 2004 George and Gracie began laying eggs in their PG&E nest, prompting the company to install a nest cam high above Beale Street. This year, George and Gracie moved to the

PG&E continued on page 11



# CONSERVATION CORNER

## HELP SURVEY BIRD LIFE AT THE NORTH RICHMOND SHORELINE

Golden Gate Audubon, in conjunction with our work on the North Richmond Shoreline Academy project, is getting ready to begin our next bird census, with a focus on shorebirds and raptors. The count begins in September and covers three sites along the North Richmond shoreline: Point Pinole, West County Landfill Loop, and Wildcat Creek Park. Each team of birders will visit their site four times per month, twice during high tide and twice during ebbing tide. The census will last one year, through August of 2008.

If you've worked on a census before or know your water birds well, you're a perfect candidate for a census leader position. If you haven't done a count before, we'd still love to have you! We'll even provide binoculars if you need them. Thanks to a generous grant from CALFED, all census volunteers will be paid for their work at a rate of \$15 per hour. Specific job descriptions are available from the GGA office.

If you're interested in working on the census, please contact Michael Martin, Golden Gate Audubon's Volunteer and Membership Development Coordinator, at [mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org) or 510.843.7295, as soon as possible. Include

your name, contact information, availability (times, days, etc.), birding skills, any equipment you have available for the census (such as scopes or binoculars), and whether or not you've worked on a census before.

## GGA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

### Saturdays, September 8, October 13,

9 a.m. – noon

Save the Quail habitat restoration workday at Presidio. Meet at Natural Resources Field Office, 1539 Pershing Dr., San Francisco.

### Sundays, September 9, October 14,

9 a.m. – noon

Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge workday. Help prepare habitat for California Least Terns. Meet at main refuge gate at northwest corner of former Alameda Naval Air Station, Alameda.

### Saturday, September 15, 9 a.m. – noon

Join more than 50,000 conservation advocates from across the state at the 23rd Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day. Since 1985, more than 750,000 Californians have turned out for what the Guinness Book of World Records calls "the largest garbage collection." We'll host a site at Pier 94, in conjunction with Literacy for



Volunteers from Travis Air Force base planting native vegetation at Harding Park, San Francisco.  
Samantha Murray

Environmental Justice's efforts to clean up San Francisco's southern waterfront and the Bayview/Hunters Point neighborhood. If you'd like to participate, please RSVP by Wednesday, September 13, to Michael Martin at 510.843.7295 or [mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org).

### Tuesday, September 18, 7 – 8.30 p.m.

Volunteer Orientation Night. Come learn about GGA's conservation and education programs and how you can get involved! Free pizza and drinks to all who attend. Meet in the Randall Room of the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco. Please RSVP to Michael Martin by Friday, September 14.

### Saturday, September 22, 9 a.m. – noon

Save the Quail habitat restoration workday at Harding Park. Meet at the parking lot at the corner of Sunset Blvd. and Lake Merced Blvd.

### Saturday, October 6, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Ocean Fest: Discover Your Marine Sanctuaries. Celebrate our magnificent ocean along the water's edge at West Crissy Field, San Francisco. Come enjoy sustainable seafood, local beers and wines, live music, kids' activities, raffle prizes, and more. Free admission. For more information, see [www.farallones.org](http://www.farallones.org).

For more information, or for directions to any of the activity sites, please contact Michael Martin.



# SPEAKER SERIES

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m. At 7 p.m., delicious snacks are served by hospitality coordinator Susanne Shields. Speaker Series coordinator is Sarah Reed.

## California and Western Birds in Motion

Larry Arbanas

**Thursday, September 20**  
**Berkeley**

**Tuesday, September 25**  
**San Francisco**

Larry Arbanas's presentation, guaranteed to draw oohs and aahs, will feature three videos of birds from California, Arizona, and Mexico. You'll see Burrowing Owls at Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge, White-tailed Kites near Mt. Diablo, Clapper Rails at Arrowhead Marsh, Brown Pelicans flying at the Marin Headlands, Barn Owls foraging at Pt. Reyes, Sage Thrashers and Ospreys at Mono Lake, dancing Western Grebes on Clear Lake, and many other birds, often in close-ups. The bright, vibrant videos were made using the finest high-definition television equipment from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Larry Arbanas (Earthwhile Productions) is a professional videographer and research associate for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. His passion for filming birds began in 1989 and has gradually become a full-time profession since he moved to Northern California a decade ago.

**Berkeley:** Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin).

Directions: [www.northbrae.org/directions.htm](http://www.northbrae.org/directions.htm)

**San Francisco:** County Fair Building, San Francisco Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way. Directions: [www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html)



Grant Reed

Lilac-breasted Roller in Botswana.

## Safari to Botswana, Namibia, and Zambia

Organized for Golden Gate Audubon, this safari, April 2–17, 2008, takes participants from the Okavango Delta in Botswana—one of Africa's last pristine wilderness areas—through the northern Kalahari into the Chobe wilderness of Namibia, and to the Zambezi River in Zambia. Accommodations are in tent camps and lodges. The trip is led by Grant Reed, an experienced guide in the region, who gave presentations at GGA's Speaker Series in February. Price is \$5,085 per person/double occupancy. For a detailed itinerary, visit our website, or for an application, contact Ruth Tobey, 510.528.2093 or [ruthtobey@earthlink.net](mailto:ruthtobey@earthlink.net).

## San Francisco Finishes Near Top in ABC Contest

The results of the 2007 America's Birdiest City contest are in, and San Francisco finished second in our category. At 203 species, Dauphin Island, Alabama, with its prime position on a migration flyway, was way ahead of the Golden Gate Audubon team's final count of 178.

Here are the finalists in various categories: large coastal city: Corpus Christi, TX, 240; small coastal city: Dauphin Island, AL, 203; large inland city: San Antonio, TX, 179; small inland city: Duluth, MN, 162; inland county east: St. Louis County, MN, 198; inland county west: Kern County, CA, 235; coastal county Atlantic Coast: Washington County, ME, 160; coastal county Gulf Coast: Nueces County, TX, 254; and coastal county Pacific Coast: Los Angeles County, 272.

GGA thanks David Armstrong for all his hard work organizing the teams of birders and compiling the results. GGA hopes to participate in next year's contest. Stay tuned for details.

## Wanted: Video Camera

GGA's San Francisco Conservation Committee seeks a video camera to record wildlife for educational and other conservation-related purposes. The camera will initially be used to document Western Snowy Plovers at the Wildlife Protection Area in Crissy Field and Ocean Beach. The committee is looking for an easy-to-use camera with CD-ROM, IEEE1394 port and cable, 10X zoom or higher, external microphone, headphone, optical image stabilizing, 2-7 lux, and tripod with a fluid head. Contact Noreen Weeden, [noreen@naturetrip.com](mailto:noreen@naturetrip.com) or 415.252.1039.



# FIELD TRIPS

PAM BELCHAMBER, COORDINATOR

\$      Entrance fee  
          Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org).

## San Francisco Botanical Garden

**Saturday, September 1, 10 a.m. – noon**  
 Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis,  
 SF Nature Education, [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org);  
 Darin Dawson, SF Botanical Garden  
 Docent, 415.387.9160

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cosponsored by Botanical Garden, San Francisco Nature Education, and GGA.

## San Francisco Botanical Garden

**Sunday, September 2, 8 – 10:30 a.m.**  
 Alan Ridley, [allanrid@pacbell.net](mailto:allanrid@pacbell.net); Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. The garden's micro-habitats attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

## Richmond to Berkeley on SF Bay Trail

**Sunday, September 2, 8:40 a.m.**  
 Leader: Kathy Jarrett,  
 510.547.1233 (no calls after 9 p.m.),  
[kathy\\_jarrett@yahoo.com](mailto:kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com)

Meet at 8:40 a.m. at El Cerrito Del Norte BART or 9 a.m. at end of S. 51st St. in Richmond. There is a spur from the SF Bay Trail to this point. We will bird along the Bay Trail, through the Eastshore State Park, from Richmond to Emeryville and end at Aquatic Park in Berkeley. Bring bicycle lock, sunscreen, and liquids; bring lunch or purchase at Sea Breeze Market in Berkeley. Bicycle helmet required. Rain cancels. Reservations not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated. Take Bayview exit from I-580 north and turn left to

cross west over freeway. Go left on Seaport, immediately left on S. 51st St., and proceed to end and park on street. Entrance to short spur to SF Bay Trail starts here. If you are concerned about security, park at Point Isabel and ride north on trail about .75 mile. Email leader for bicycle/transit info.

## Jewel Lake in Tilden

Berkeley  
**Friday, September 7, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.**  
 Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,  
[philajane6@yahoo.com](mailto:philajane6@yahoo.com)

Meet at parking lot at north end of Central Park Dr. for a mile-long stroll through this lush riparian area. We will look for lingering breeders, early-arriving winter birds, and migrants. Mark your calendar for Jewel Lake walks on first Friday of month in October and November.

## Coastal San Francisco

**Saturday, September 8, 8 a.m.**  
 Dan Murphy, 415.564.0074,  
[murphsf@comcast.net](mailto:murphsf@comcast.net)

Meet in parking lot between South and Middle Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will bird in the park, at Lake Merced, and in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of migrating flycatchers, warblers, sparrows, and other vagrants. Bring lunch and be prepared for cold weather near coast.

## Alcatraz Island

**Thursday, September 13**  
 Pam Belchamber, 510.549.2839

Join National Park Service biologist Christian Hellwig on this trip offered exclusively to GGA Supporting Members. Trips are limited to 10 participants. Reserve by contacting Kirsten Bunting, GGA office manager, [ggas@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:ggas@goldengateaudubon.org) or at 510.843.2222. Once we have sent you confirmation, we will book your space on the 9 a.m. Early Bird ferry with Alca-



Juvenile Wood Duck at Lake Merced.

Noreen Weeden

traz Cruises. You will pay for your ticket (\$12.75) on arrival at the will-call window at the pier. Note: Boarding time is between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. The ferry departs from Pier 33, near corner of Bay St. and Embarcadero. Trip is timed for return on 11:30 a.m. boat, arriving Pier 33 at 11:45. To reach Pier 33 using transit, take F streetcar, adjacent to Ferry Building, or No. 10 Muni bus (fare: \$1.50). If arriving on BART, exit Embarcadero Station and board the F streetcar. If you are driving, parking is available at lot across from Pier 33 (early bird available) and other area garages.

## Lake Merced

San Francisco  
**Saturday, September 15, 8 a.m. – noon**  
 Mark Eaton, 415.298.5128,  
[mark@markeaton.org](mailto:mark@markeaton.org)

Meet at parking lot at west end of concrete bridge at South Lake Merced, on John Muir Dr. between Lake Merced Blvd. and Skyline Blvd. We will bird areas around lake and then travel to other destinations in western SF based on recent sightings, weather conditions, and whims of the leader. Dress in layers and bring enough clothing to stand up to a brisk sea breeze. Trip may involve significant walking, including some off trail. Lake Merced is poorly served by the 18 bus line. The trip is not conducive to public transportation, but leader can carry three people in his vehicle once trip leaves Lake Merced.

## **Lincoln Park Bird Walk**

San Francisco

**Sunday, September 16, 8 – 11 a.m.**

David Armstrong, 650.922.6380,

darmstrong99@yahoo.com

Meet on Merrie Way (parking lot up the hill from the Cliff House) for this walking tour of some of city's finest fall birding locations. We'll cover about 3 miles of varied terrain (with some short climbs/stairs) in search of migrants and vagrants. Trip limited to 20 people. Contact leader after September 4 to reserve a place. Email is preferred.

## **Corona Heights**

San Francisco

**Friday, September 21, 8 – 10 a.m.**

Charles Hibbard; Lewis Ellingham;

Margaret Goodale, 415.554.9600 ext. 16,

mgoodale@randallmuseum.org

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, off Roosevelt. We'll enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring hilltop scrub and south cliff.

## **Merrie Way**

San Francisco

**Sunday, September 23, 8 a.m.**

Harry Fuller, 415.344.2363,

anzatowhee@yahoo.com

Join Harry Fuller for his last Merrie Way field trip. Harry is moving to Oregon, and we will miss him. Meet at the unpaved parking lot at west end of Pt. Lobos above Cliff House at Land's End. We will see Brown Pelicans, Elegant Terns, and Heermann's Gulls. We should expect migrants galore and perhaps a few vagrants. Last year we recorded the city's only Lark Bunting. Email leader for transit information.

## **Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park**

Oakland

**Wednesday, September 26,**

**9:30 am – noon**

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,

hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,

510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Meet at large spherical cage near Nature

## **Training for New Field Trip Leaders**

Have you been on so many Golden Gate Audubon field trips that you can identify many birds before the leader does? Or have you taken a few of our birding classes at Albany Adult School? Then you should consider becoming a GGA field trip leader!

We're always looking for more experienced birders to lead field trips throughout the Bay Area and beyond. If you have a special place where you enjoy birding and would like to introduce others to its wonders, we would love to work with you. Join us as we discuss what makes a good field trip, how to get people interested in birding, how field trips tie into GGA's Bay Area conservation goals, and much more.

GGA veteran leaders Bob Lewis, Allan Ridley, and Helen McKenna will host a training session for birders interested in joining our team of field trip leaders on Saturday, September 15, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Berkeley Meadow of Eastshore State Park. Boxed lunches will be provided. Please RSVP to Michael Martin by Wednesday, September 12, at 510.843.7295 or mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org.

We'll get in some great birding at the training, so bring your scope or binoculars!

Take University Ave. in Berkeley west over the freeway and turn left on Frontage Rd. Park in the area behind the SeaBreeze Market. Walk across University Ave. to the Eastshore State Park entrance

Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down the lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. This is the quietest month at the lake, but residents such as herons and woodpeckers should be out in force, and the first winter migrants should be arriving.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking is at boathouse lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

## **Heron's Head Park**

San Francisco

**Saturday, September 29, 3 p.m.**

Eddie Bartley, 415-355-0450,

eddie@naturetrip.com

Meet at Heron's Head Park at intersection of Jennings and Cargo Way for this trip to an amazing bird oasis on the city's southern waterfront. In the 16 years since Golden Gate Audubon noted the increasing shorebird use of an illegal fill site formerly known as Pier 98, this Port of San Francisco property has blossomed into a valuable habitat for resident and migrating shorebirds, waders, waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds. Come explore this beautifully restored tidal marsh with one of the contributors to *100 Birds of Heron's Head* (see page 11). After a hike

out to the tip of the Heron's Head and a look around India Basin, we might carpool to another, more recent but less accessible restoration site, Pier 94, to see more birds and discuss how unstable bay lands can be transformed into vital wildlife habitat.

**Car:** From I-280 or Hwy. 101, take Cesar Chavez/Army Street exit. Go east on Cesar Chavez. Turn right on Third St., then left on Cargo Way, which ends at park entrance. **Transit:** Take 19 Polk bus to Evans Ave. and Jennings St. Walk down Jennings to Cargo Way.

## **Napa River Birding Cruise**

Vallejo Marina, Vallejo

**Sunday, November 4, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

If you've always wanted to see and bird the Napa River, this is your opportunity. The tide will be falling, and the birding should be excellent. The *Delphinus* will leave and return from Vallejo Marina. Bring lunch and appropriate clothing. Trip is limited to 30 participants. Cost is \$80 for Supporting Members, \$90 for non-members. Payment is due October 19. Reserve space by contacting Kristen Bunting, GGA office manager, 510.843.2222 or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org.

Take Hwy. 80 east toward Sacramento. Cross Carquinez Bridge and exit at Sonoma Blvd. Continue in left lane until Curtola Parkway intersection and jog left onto Mare Island Way. Go past Vallejo Ferry Terminal and turn left at stoplight onto Harbor Way. Turn left into first driveway and park. A crew member will meet you at gate for "K" dock.



# CLASSES

Six GGA-sponsored natural history classes are offered through Albany Adult School, 601 San Gabriel Avenue, Albany. Register online at <http://albany.k12.ca.us/adult/>. You can also sign up in person. Call 510.559.6580 for more information.

## Restoring Wildlands of the East Bay

Jeff Nachman & Bob Sibley

Tuesdays, September 4–25, 7–8:30 p.m.,  
plus two Saturday field trips, September 15 and 29

The East Bay is home to some outstanding restoration ecology stories. Learn about successes, failures, constraints, and opportunities of restoring wildlife and plant communities. Course will explore the history, science, and policy issues regarding habitat restoration projects in multiple areas. The two daylong field trips will highlight both terrestrial and shoreline habitats discussed in class. Check [www.goldenhour.org](http://www.goldenhour.org) for additional information.

## Shorebird Identification

Rusty Scalf, Bob Lewis

Wednesdays, September 5 – 26, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four field trips on the Saturday or Sunday following each class (your choice)

Improve your ability to identify common and not-so-common shorebirds. The instructors will cover some of the more difficult identification problems. Field trips will focus on shorebirds, but won't ignore other species, and will try to locate some less common shorebirds. Field trip times, which depend on the tides, will be announced. See <http://home.comcast.net/~rlewis727> for more details.

## Cranes, Geese, and Other Central Valley Birds

Rusty Scalf, Bob Lewis

Wednesday, November 14, 7 – 8 p.m.,  
plus a three-day field trip, November 16 – 18

Come learn about and see the larger wintering birds of the Central Valley, including Sandhill Cranes, five species of wintering geese, and swans. The class will discuss migration and wintering behavior. The fee does not include meals or motels. More details on <http://home.comcast.net/~rlewis727>.

## Birding by Ear

Deni Wright

Wednesday, September 12 – October 17, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus six field trips (8:30 – 11:30 a.m.) on the Saturday following each class

Autumn is a less vocal time of year for birds, providing a good opportunity to study common local species and their sounds, as well as cover basic tips for birding by ear in fall and winter. The six field trips will survey a wide variety of habitats. For field trip dates and locations: [www.blkittiwake.com](http://www.blkittiwake.com).

## New Fall Class in San Francisco

Golden Gate Audubon is excited to sponsor a new class in San Francisco, at the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. Registration (\$70 fee) is available through Golden Gate Audubon, 510.843.2222. The instructor is Allan Ridley, known for his San Francisco Arboretum bird walks (see page 6).

## Basics of Birding

Allan Ridley

Tuesdays, October 2 – 23, 7 – 9 p.m., plus three Saturday field trips (8:30 – 11:30 a.m.), October 6, 13, and 20.

This introduction to the techniques of birding and the biology of birds aims to develop a truly three-dimensional foundation for what may turn out to be a life-long interest in the observation of birds.

Species identification—with emphasis on recognizing bird groups—will be part of the class, but the focus will be on the amazing adaptations of structure and function that support the diverse lifestyles of birds. We'll discuss the biology of bird behaviors, observe seasonal changes in behaviors, and consider the marvels of migration. The field trips will go to different habitats to observe a wide variety of birds, focusing on flight patterns and behaviors. Tips on using binoculars will help provide rich observational moments. We'll outline a basic birding library and practice the effective use of field guides for identification and learning.

## Birding Basics

Eddie Bartley

Tuesdays, October 16 – November 13, 7 – 8:30 p.m.,  
plus five field trips on the Saturday following each class

Designed for beginning birders, the class is modeled after David Allen Sibley's *Birding Basics*, which would be useful to own as a textbook. It will cover bird behavior, identification, physiology, and taxonomy, as well as use of equipment and birding hot spots. Contact the instructor at [eddie@naturetrip.com](mailto:eddie@naturetrip.com) or go to [www.naturetrip.com/GGASClasses.html](http://www.naturetrip.com/GGASClasses.html) for more details.

## Birds and Butterflies—Easy Garden Enchantment

Corinne Greenberg

Mondays, September 10 – October 1, 7 – 9 p.m.,  
with one Saturday field trip, October 6

Gorgeous slide shows, fascinating natural history, and easy and ecological management lessons for using native plants will help you create habitat for birds and other creatures. Materials fee is \$5, payable to instructor. For more information, go to [www.thegardenisateacher.com](http://www.thegardenisateacher.com).



# OBSERVATIONS

BRUCE MAST

MAY 1 – JULY 31, 2007

**W**hile Observations took a welcome 3 months off, birders remained busy in the field, drawn by the beauty of spring migration and the occasional rarity.

## LOONS TO DUCKS

A juvenile Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) was spotted in MRN on Jul. 12, circling Olema Marsh twice before continuing north toward Tomales Bay (RTh).

## RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A Franklin's Gull was noted on 2 occasions at Pigeon Pt., SM, on May 13 and then on the 25th (RTh). An immature Franklin's Gull also turned up at Sunnyvale WPCP, SCL, beginning Jul. 27 (PM; BRe, FV, DWe). Black-legged Kittiwakes were spotted from Pigeon Pt., SM, on May 3 and 13 (RTh). A Common Tern on Jun. 27 was an early arrival at Crissy Field, SF (RS). Black Terns wandered through on May 8 and Jul. 12 at Salt Pond A16, SCL (FV, BRe) and on May 22 at Hayward's Landing, Hayward RS, ALA (BRi).

The most dramatic event this summer was the irruption of arctic alcids off California's Central Coast, perhaps linked to the reportedly cold temperatures and unusually krill-rich waters. The first Horned Puffin report from Pigeon Pt., SM, hit the hotlines May 26 (RTh; mob). At their peak in early and mid-June, as many as 12 Horned Puffins were moored off the SM coast, mostly concentrated around Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Chimney Rock, PRNS, and other MRN waters hosted 6–8 more and at least 4 lingered off Bodega Head, SON, through Jul. 5.

The phenomenon was not limited to puffins. Ancient Murres were sighted in 2s and 3s in the same coastal waters through that time period (RTh, PM, RS). On Jun. 5–9, a handful of birders even found a Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*) loitering around Chimney Rock, PRNS (RS; JSt, LL). On the 9th, a second Thick-billed Murre was located at Marshall Gulch, SON (JLu). In all the alcid hoopla, Tufted Puffins were almost an afterthought, reported



Horned Puffin.

Vagrant watchers at Outer Pt., PRNS, MRN, were treated to an Eastern Kingbird May 30–Jun. 3 (RS; RTe), a Gray Catbird on May 30 (NW), and a Brown Thrasher Jun. 2–4 (RS, RC; RTe, JLo). The MRN Headlands also hosted a Red-eyed Vireo Jun. 17 (WL, TH).

## WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

While May 7 was the peak for passing western migrants, the rarer migrants were concentrated in late May and early June. This season's warbler tally included 1 Tennessee; 9 Northern Parula; 3 Chestnut-sided, 3 Magnolia, 1 Prairie, 1 Palm, 1 Blackpoll, and 2 Black-and-White; 7 American Redstarts; 1 Ovenbird; 2 Northern Waterthrush; 2 Hooded; 1 Canada; and 8 Yellow-breasted Chats. Summer Tanagers made appearances at the Outer Pt. on May 13 and Jun. 20 (BS, RS). A first-year male Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) provided a rare treat on Jun. 3 at Redwood Cr., MRN (RTe).

A Lark Bunting spent 3 days along Etzel Rd. south of Dixon, SOL, starting Jun. 16 (Ed Pandolfino; mob). At least 14 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks passed through between May 8–Jul. 22. Indigo Buntings flashed their brilliant blues at an Inverness Park, MRN, feeder on May 18 (RC); at the Skyline Ridge OSP, SM, parking lot, May 20–Jul. 10 (BRe; mob); and at San Gregorio, SM, May 27 (RTh). Up to 14 Yellow-headed Blackbirds skulked in the marshes at the EEC (SCL) May 15–28 (AM; mob). Finally, a careful observer ID'd a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) visiting a feeder in Muir Beach, MRN, on Jun. 1 (DMK).

### Important Regional Abbreviations

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater and Janet Collins for assistance in compiling data.

**Abbreviations for Observers:** AE, Al Eisner; AF, Alan Fish; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; AM, Andrew Martin; AV, Ann Verdi; AY, Ann Yasuda; BC, Brent Campos; BF, Brian Fitch; BRe, Bob Reiling; BRi, Bob Richmond; BS, Bob Speckels; CDL, Calvin D Lou; DA, David Armstrong; DM, Dean Manley; DMK, Dave MacKenzie; DWe, Dave Weber; DWi, David Wimpfheimer; EP, Ed Pandolfino; ESe, Emily Serkin; EST, Emily Strauss; FV, Frank Vanslager; GH, Garth Harwood; JLo, John Longstress; JLu, John Luther; JSc, Jim Scarff; JSt, John Sterling; KO, Kris Olson; KRH, Kirsten R. Holmquist; LB, Len Blumin; LH, Lisa Hug; LL, Les Lieurance; MR, Mike Rogers; MS, Marty Sidor; NW, Nick Whelan; PD, Peter Dramer; PK, Pat Kenny; PM, Peter Metropoulos; RC, Rigdon Currie; RK, Roland Kenner; RR, Roger Russon; RS, Rich Stallcup; RTe, Ryan Terrill; RTh, Ron Thorn; SR, Steve Rottenborn; TH, Tony Harrow; TR, Ted Robertson; UW, Uzelle Williams; WL, William Legge

**Abbreviations for Counties and Others:** ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CP, County Park; Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; EEC, Environmental Education Center; FOS, first of season; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L, Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara, SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant

Price auctioning off a Swarovski spotting scope, a four-star birding trip to a Costa Rica resort, and other irresistible items. Be sure to log on to the auction website at [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org) before the event for details on items featured in both auctions.

The centerpiece of the evening will be an awards ceremony honoring those who've done significant work on behalf of Bay Area birds and other wildlife. The Elsie Roemer Conservation Award will be given to individuals whose volunteer efforts have shown consistent dedication to the preservation of the natural environment. The Golden Gull Award—a newly established honor—will recognize an individual or organization in the public arena whose actions have significantly advanced Golden Gate Audubon's mission by protecting Bay Area birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitats or by inspiring and engaging our community in the protection of our shared, local environment.

Advance reservations for the 90th anniversary celebration are required. No tickets will be sold at the door. Tickets range from \$45 (basic) to \$90 (premium) to \$250 (sponsor). Tickets are limited to the first 250 guests. So make your reservations early by contacting Michael Martin at [mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org) or 510.843.7295.

Pier 1, headquarters of the Port of San Francisco, is located along the Embarcadero, just north of the Ferry Building. Parking near Pier 1 is extremely limited (there are a few paid parking lots in the area, as well as some metered spots), so we encourage you take public transportation to the event. Pier 1 is a five- to six-minute walk from the Embarcadero BART station and is directly adjacent to MUNI's F-line stop at the corner of Washington Street and the Embarcadero. If you need assistance with directions to the event, please contact Michael Martin.

## Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

### GOLDEN EAGLE (\$1 000 OR MORE)

Anonymous, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (90th Anniversary Celebration), Arlene H. Sullivan, Starbucks Make Your Mark Volunteer Program.

### PEREGRINE FALCON (\$500 TO \$999)

Anonymous, Anonymous (90th Anniversary Event), Linda L. Eby, Katherine Erickson, Goldman, Sachs & Company (Save the Quail), Phil Price & Juliet Lamont: Creekcats Environmental Fund, Mara K. Melandry.

### LEAST TERN (\$200 TO \$499)

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### GRANTS

**Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program:**  
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**Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation:**  
Eco-Oakland Program  
**Maybeck Foundation:** Creatures from the New Lagoon event  
**Port of San Francisco:** 100 Birds of Heron's Head Park publication  
**The David B. Gold Foundation:** Eco-Oakland Program  
**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – Coastal Programs:**  
North & Central Bay Wetlands  
**Weeden Foundation:** Alameda Wildlife Refuge

# Golden Gate Audubon Volunteers Create Field Guide for San Francisco Community

**O**n Sunday, July 22, about 70 people gathered at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House in San Francisco to celebrate the publication of *A Field Guide to 100 Birds of Heron's Head*. The handsome, 96-page, spiral-bound guide highlights the species commonly seen along the city's southern bay shoreline from Islais Creek to Candlestick Point, concentrating on 25-acre Heron's Head Park. Each species is represented by a description of essential visual and behavioral characteristics, and is accompanied by a color photograph and a handy graphic showing season abundance.

The guide, created especially for the residents of the Bayview and Hunters Point community, is the result of more than a year of hard work by dedicated volunteers, many of them affiliated with Golden Gate Audubon. Eddie Bartley of GGA's Education Committee and Alan Hopkins, Noreen Weeden, and Matt Zlatunich of GGA's San Francisco Conservation Committee wrote the exacting species descriptions. Eddie Bartley contributed most of the photos. Mark Chambers donated his editorial and design expertise to guarantee a professional-quality publication.

At the July 22 event, Alan Hopkins gave a slide-show about the history of Heron's Head Park and its wetlands, which were created through the efforts of Golden Gate Audubon, the Port of San Francisco, and other local agencies. Eddie Bartley described the genesis of the field guide and displayed photographs from the book.



Noreen Weeden

Ben Francisco and Anthony Khalil from Literacy for Environmental Justice holding the new field guide to Heron's Head.

Vocalizations of the guide's birds played in the background, thanks to a compilation made by Chris Okon. Refreshments were provided by the California Culinary Academy, the Port of San Francisco, and Mark Chambers, and the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House donated the space.

*A Field Guide to 100 Birds of Heron's Head* was created to introduce Bayview/Hunters Point residents to the rewards of observing birds in the local natural environment. In addition to species descriptions, the book includes an introduction to birding, identification tips, and a map of the southern bay shoreline from Candlestick Point to Islais Creek Channel. Neighborhood high school students and residents will receive the guide free of charge (the book is not for sale). Teachers and staff at local schools and environmental organiza-

tions such as Potrero Hill NABE Summer Fun, Literacy for Environmental Justice, YMCA Bayview Youth, Boys & Girls Club of Hunters Point, San Francisco Parks Trust, Candlestick Point State Park, and Kids in Parks are excited to have a resource to share with community members.

Crina Pogge, director of the Center for Habitat Restoration at the City College of San Francisco, calls the book "one of the best regional bird guides I have ever seen." "I regularly take students to Heron's Head Park," she notes, "and this book will very much help students learn bird ID. This is a wonderful resource and will help make the little gem of a park more popular."

Many other people generously contributed to the guide. Additional photographs were supplied by Cris Benton, Mike Dazzenbaker, Alan Hopkins, David Jesus, Lee Karney, Robert Lewis, Glenn Nevill, Jeff Poklen, Noreen Weeden, and Mike Yip. Malcolm Margolin wrote the foreword, and Arthur Feinstein provided an introduction. The LEF Foundation, the Port of San Francisco, and the Potrero Nuevo Fund/Tides Foundation generously donated the funds necessary to print the book.

Members of Golden Gate Audubon's San Francisco Conservation Committee are planning a fall field trip to Heron's Head for students using the field guide. If you live or teach in Bayview/Hunters Point and would like to know more about the guide, contact Noreen Weeden, [noreen@naturetrip.com](mailto:noreen@naturetrip.com) or 415.252.1039.

by Judith Dunham

## PG&E from page 3

Bay Bridge, and SCPBRG went on a "rescue mission" for the eggs (bridges are often lethal environments to fledgling chicks). Two of the three eggs that Gracie laid on the bridge were viable and raised by a foster mother. One survived. After the egg rescue, George and Gracie returned to their PG&E home and laid one more egg, which hatched this past May.

PG&E has also been on the forefront of efforts to address global

warming. It is a founding member of the California Climate Registry, a supporter of many of California's emissions reduction and renewable energy policies, and a national leader among utilities.

Golden Gate Audubon thanks PG&E for its support of our programs and for all of its conservation work throughout the state. We look forward to continuing to work with PG&E on conservation initiatives in the Bay Area and beyond in the future.

## FREIGHT TERMINAL from page 1

home. Only the Emeryville Crescent and Albany Mudflats host more shorebirds and waterfowl in the Central Bay. Approximately 5 percent of the world's population of California Clapper Rails lives in the MLK shoreline. The clapper rail is listed as endangered under both federal and state Endangered Species Acts. The thousands of migratory birds that use the tidal wetlands and marsh as a crucial stopover along the Pacific Flyway are also protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The MLK shoreline is an important community resource, particularly for the people of East Oakland. Approximately 300,000 visitors each year enjoy the park, including many who rarely have opportunities to connect with nature. Golden Gate Audubon's Eco-Oakland Program brings East Oakland children and families to the park so they can explore and restore their local watershed.

Despite the importance of this urban wetland, the adjacent area has been slated for "light industrial" development. Appropriate development might include office buildings or other low-impact uses. Unfortunately, a number of highly damaging projects, including a large casino, have been proposed over the past few years. The casino was defeated, thanks in part to Golden Gate Audubon members, who spoke out to protect MLK's birds.

The current proposal for a motor freight

terminal threatens to disturb the birds that nest, roost, and forage at the shoreline. Developer Swan, LLC hopes to rent the freight terminal to interstate trucking company Roadway Express, which would move to the site from its existing facility nearer the Port of Oakland, bringing light, noise, and runoff pollution. Another terminal is proposed for the adjacent eight-acre lot.

The two proposed trucking terminals would operate 24 hours a day, seven days per week. All night and day, trucks would bring increased traffic, noise, and light pollution, which could disturb wildlife significantly and undermine the value of the wetland as a haven for wildlife and a park for East Oakland families.

In June of this year, Golden Gate Audubon filed an appeal with the Board of Port Commissioners, asking it to deny Swan's permit because the Port of Oakland failed to complete a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR). At an August 7 hearing, the Board of Port Commissioners denied our appeal and approved Swan's permit application for the project.

As of this writing, we are continuing to work with the developer to explore options for minimizing the impacts of the proposed development, but we remain unconvinced that the motor freight terminal, even if mitigated, can be an appropriate neighbor for the MLK shoreline. Unless significant

project modifications can be identified, Golden Gate Audubon will advocate for a full EIR to ensure that any development will not harm the wildlife at this critical wetland site.

by Eli Saddler,  
Conservation Director

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Contact Mayor Ron Dellums and the Oakland City Council to ask them to stop this and other incompatible developments adjacent to the restored wetlands. The people of Oakland and the wildlife deserve a park not threatened by noise and light pollution or toxic runoff from large diesel trucks. For more information and points to include in your letter, visit [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org) or contact Conservation Director Eli Saddler at 510.843.6551 or [saddler@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:saddler@goldengateaudubon.org).

Get involved with Golden Gate Audubon's East Bay Conservation Committee, which meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the GGA offices (snacks and drinks provided!). Contact Conservation Director Eli Saddler.

Volunteer for GGA's Eco-Oakland Program and help introduce East Oakland children and their families to the MLK shoreline and their local watershed. Contact Anthony De Ciccio at 510.635.5533 or [decicco.anthony@gmail.com](mailto:decicco.anthony@gmail.com).

## GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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